Cox's Campaign Manager a Willing Fighter Against Odds

George H. White's Dauntlesss Spirit Tested Long Ago in Klondike, Where He Won Fortune and Thereby a Bride

By DONALD MacGREGOR.

IN Congress half a dozen years ago they called him "Alaska Pete," but to-day he is George White, the new Chairman of the Democratic National Committee, and as such is manager of the Presidential campaign of Gov. Cox. The name "Alaska Pete" came from the fact that White, just out of Princeton, joined the rush for gold twenty years ago in the Klondike.

White got gold, too, more than $100,000 worth of it, for that was the prize he set out for to win a girl with whom he had fallen in love, and who, by chance, happened to have a father who insisted that the man who married his daughter should be, fully able to support her in the way to which she had been accustomed.

"How much money have you got?" the father asked White when he called around to discuss his matrimonial chances.

"None," said White, "but I can support her all right."

"I don't know about that," replied the father. "My daughter isn't going to marry any man until he has at least $100,000. When you get it, you come around and I'll talk with you."

Off for the Klondike.

White went back to his room somewhat dejected, but he bought a paper on the way and read of the rush to the Klondike. Gold, the paper said, was to be found all over Alaska. It would be easy, White figured, to pick up $100,000 and hurry back to the altar. So he packed up his grip and departed.

Gold, however, wasn't that easy to find. It took him two and a half years, beginning in 1898, to gather a pile sufficient to meet the requirements. It was two and a half years of hardship, of insufficient food, of frozen North, of sickness. White wears the marks of it to-day, and, although he is only forty-eight, he looks much older.

There is a slight stoop in his shoulders, much of his hair is gone, there are premature lines in his face and his complexion is weatherbeaten. With it all, however, there is a certain personal attractiveness about him, a sort of determined air and much earnestness. His ability to concentrate is marked.

White is six feet in height and maybe a trifle more. He weighs about 150 and is rawboned and rangy. His eyes are bluish gray. He wears low collars, which give full play to a pronounced Adam's apple, and he has a heavy beard which he has to shave off morning and evening if it is not to be noticeable. His friends joke about his "Alaska whiskers."

In talking with White it is easy to gather the impression that he is a rough-and-tumble sort of a person, ready for a fight at the drop of the hat. Sitting down he slides clear into a chair, resting himself more on the middle of his back, entwining his long legs around each other and swinging one of them with an even rhythm. Even then he's ready to jump up at the slightest excuse, ready for action.

Going after big game with the odds against him seems to be a pleasure to White. In a way, that has been his life. This is typified in his search for $100,000 worth of gold in Alaska, in his entry into public life and throughout his political career. Sometimes he has won and sometimes he has lost. Losses do not feaze him much. You couldn't tell the difference from his poker face.

Back from Alaska, White went to live with his $100,000 bride at Marietta, an average Ohio town, which took its name from the Indians. Marietta, by the way, was the first town settled by white people in Ohio by Moravian missionaries. It is on the Ohio River, across from which are the hills of West Virginia. One of Marietta's claims to fame is that it is a terminus of the C. & M. Railroad, running between that city and Cleveland, a jolty coal branch of the Pennsylvania.

White Goes to Legislature.

Marietta is in Washington county, which is and always has been overwhelmingly Republican in politics. The Democrats always put up a ticket each year, but it went down to defeat so regularly that it was hard to get anybody to serve. In 1904 the Democrats couldn't find a soul who would agree to run for the State Legislature so they picked George White, who happened to be visiting his family at Cape May for the summer. When White got back and learned what had happened he was furious. They wouldn't—said they couldn't—take his name off the ticket, so he made the race and, wonder of wonders, was elected, not by a large vote, but sufficient.

White served in the lower house in the Ohio State Legislature at Columbus for three years. That was one term with a year added to it, for it was then that the time of service of a State legislator was extended from two years to three. Then he ran for Congress, the first Democrat ever sent to Congress from that district, the Fifteenth Ohio District, comprising six counties, Washington, Monroe, Morgan, Noble, Muskingum and Guernsey, the largest town of which is Zanesville. He ran five times in all, and was defeated twice, in 1914 and in 1918.

In Congress White knocked around with a group of Ohio Democrats in the House, which included Gov. Cox, whose race for the Presidency he is now directing. There used to be some good poker games around different places and they had a fine time. Judge Timothy T. Ansberry of Defiance, Ohio, and Washington, D. C., who figured prominently in Gov. Cox's nomination at San Francisco, was one of the crowd.

White, although Woodrow Wilson had been one of his professors in his senior year at Princeton, from which he was graduated in 1895, never capitalized this acquaintanceship after Mr. Wilson became President. There is no record of his going to the White House on any occasion after he entered Congress. In fact he and some of President Wilson's first lieutenants had some notable clashes during that period.

One of these occurred at the time the United States entered the war, when White supported a bill authorizing Theodore Roosevelt to raise a division and go to France as its commanding officer with the rank of Major-General. The Administration opposed the measure and Albert S. Burleson, Postmaster-General, always the White House political fixer, went up to the Capitol to rally the forces against it.

In the Democratic cloakroom Burleson buttonholed White.

"What's this I hear about you working for the Roosevelt bill?" asked Burleson.

"Yes, I'm for it," said White.

"Well, don't you know that the Administration is against the bill?" said Burleson, rather impatiently.

"Yes, I know," responded White, "but that's the wrong way to look at it. What you've got to get in this country now is some war enthusiasm. Roosevelt is the man to stir it up. Send him to France at the head of a division and the country will sit up and take notice. This is no time for politics."

"It seems to me," Burleson snapped, "that some of you fellows who got into Congress on Wilson's coattails would pay a little attention to what he wants."

This stirred White's ire.

"Look here, Burleson," he retorted, "You'd better go look up the election figures. I got more votes in my district than Woodrow Wilson did, and instead of his helping me I wouldn't be surprised if I hadn't helped him. You may be able to drive some of the members into line with that sort of talk, but it won't go with me. I'll vote for the Roosevelt bill and I'll work for it."

White and Burleson had another tilt at the San Francisco convention. Burleson was there working for the nomination of William G. McAdoo; White, of course, was working for Cox, being second in command under E. H. Moore, in the pre-convention organization. Along about the fortieth ballot White stumbled across Burleson, whose forty votes of Texas were being cast solidly for McAdoo time after time. White put his right hand to the back of his ear.

"I'll be waiting, Albert," he said, "to hear Texas go 'forty votes for Cox.'"

Burleson looked daggers.

"If you're going to hold your hand to your ear for that," Burleson retorted, "you'll be holding it there a darned long time."

Looking Over Old Haunts.

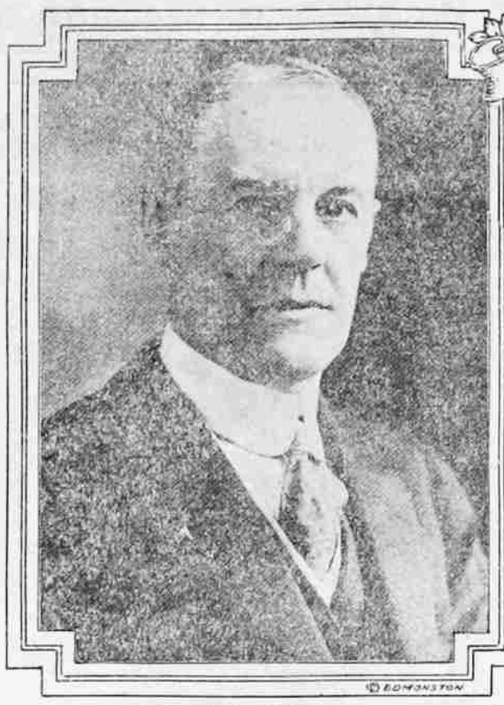
On his way back from San Francisco White went around by Seattle to look over the ground he had travelled twenty years before on the way to and from the Klondike. He didn't have a very good time. The city had changed considerably, and besides he lost his satchel. The porter got away with it in some manner at the station, and White had to content himself with buying a collar and shirt occasionally when the train stopped on the way back. He returned to Columbus to report to Gov. Cox, considerably frayed and soiled, but grinning.

"Bad luck," was all he said, "but it might have been worse."

Born in Elimira, N. Y., reared at Titusville, Pa., educated at Princeton, N. J., residing at Marietta, Ohio, White's chief business interests are in Oklahoma. He's in the oil business, drilling his own wells. Sometimes he strikes oil; sometimes he does not—but, on the whole, he makes it pay.

In politics as well as in business White is a firm believer in luck.

"At San Francisco," says he, "we got the breaks. Hard work and breaks, and pledges in writing—that's what nominated Cox. I hope we'll get the breaks in November."



GEORGE H WHITE
"ALASKA PETE" WHO WILL RUN THE COX CAMPAIGN

MRS GEORGE H. WHITE
WIFE OF THE NEW CHAIRMAN OF THE DEMOCRATIC NATIONAL COMMITTEE

'Alaska Pete,' New Democratic Chairman, Still Bears Impress of Frozen North, Where His Ventures Gained Him Nickname.

Prosaic Storage Warehouse Yields a Wealth of Romance and Mystery

A Bride's Startling Revelation, the Story of the Woman of the Mirrors, Freakish Notions of Some Patrons and Forgetfulness of Others Mingle in Reminiscences of Manager Who Sees Sentiment Linked to Worthless Articles as Well as Priceless Treasures

THE huge storage warehouse is a temple of many household gods to which come their worshippers with stories strange, comic and sentimental.

"There's the case of the mysterious vase, for instance," remarked the warehouse manager, who then went on with the story. "One day a maid came into the office carrying an elaborate bundle and asked if we could store a very valuable vase. We offered to put it into every place we have here, but none of them satisfied her. Finally her mistress came, and we showed her all the places where we could put it. Every suggestion seemed to agonize her, and we politely encouraged her to try some other warehouse or to keep the vase at home. But she insisted that it could not be allowed at home—that it would have to be out of the house before the wedding.'

"She did not look like a blushing bride. Her words only added to the mystery, which became more and more unsolvable. The vase was a sealed urn, and we could not, of course, ask why. She decided to leave it with us for a few days, provided we kept it in our office safe and swore all kinds of vows to watch it. She came back several times, and each time the discussion was repeated.

"One day she came in breathless and announced that the decision would have to be made at once as she was leaving on her honeymoon. 'How valuable is it?' we asked. 'Oh, it could never be replaced,' she declared dramatically. 'It is of no value to any one but me.' Then she leaned over and whispered confidentially, 'It holds the ashes of my dead husband, and I'm to be married again to-morrow, and, of course, he wouldn't want to have this around the house.'"

What the Visitor Sees.

Of course, it isn't often that a warehouse is used as a mausoleum, but the variety of things which are stored there would stagger the imagination even of a department store elevator operator. From complete palatial rooms taken from sixteenth century English castles to thimbles, from valuable paintings by masters to picture postcards, every conceivable article, priceless or worthless, is here.

The term "fireproof storage warehouse" has about it a steely, stony feeling, something remote and soulless and perhaps a little prisonlike. But when one goes through it on a tour of inspection with an amiable and reminiscent manager it seems more like a combination of a Fifth avenue shopping afternoon and a visit to the old attic at home. There are acres on acres of rooms—big rooms and little rooms, strong rooms, cold rooms and just rooms—full of things that mean money and things that mean more to somebody.

As the manager says, "There are enough stories here in this building to keep all the novelists in the country busy working on an eight hour day for a hundred years."

A trip through a storage warehouse is indeed a fascinating experience. Sights and stories mingle somewhat breathlessly, but one is left with the feeling that storage is a business filled with human interest.

Why do people store square pianos for years and pay more in rent than the instruments can ever be worth? Why do so many fail to recognize their own belongings? Why are they sometimes so utterly careless themselves about valuables? And why are they so fussy when other hands touch them? Why will they cherish unhappy memories even at the price of difficult sacrifice? Many such "whys" are answered in the storage warehouse.

In one room are found a pair of very large pier mirrors such as decorated the parlors or ballrooms of "the big house on the hill," in the good old days. Who had once been mirrored in these glasses? Why are they stored—and does their owner ever hope to use them again?

"Yes, it is a story," says the manager. "About twice a year a little old woman comes here and goes to this room and the attendant leaves her here alone. Until about a year ago she used to come here every month. She is a person of refinement and, obviously, has been well to do. She is in straitened circumstances now, and I don't think she can really afford to pay the storage fees. But, of course, we can't ask questions. I don't know what she does, but her address is that of an ordinary boarding house. She sometimes stays in this room a long time. We never disturb her. Only once did she ever let fall any remark. It was when the attendant did some little thing for her. She said, 'I come here to look into these mirrors because they give me back my other days.'

"Everywhere there are pieces of furniture and other things which apparently might well have gone to the auction rooms, second hand dealers and oblivion. Why do people want to store these things here, anyway? Aren't the charges more than the things are worth?

"That's just it. And yet, what you see here is nothing compared to the things we persuade our patrons to give up. We have to fight to protect people from themselves. Of course, we put suggestions as delicately as possible, but our diplomacy is often strained to the utmost to keep people from storing things which are absolutely worthless and which only cost money to keep. This space here is valuable, and we treat it as a commodity of value, not only to ourselves but to those who rent it. We do not wish to have it occupied by goods of no value.

"Look at all these old square pianos. You have probably been wondering where we got that many. The way people insist on keeping them here is one of the things which have always puzzled me.

"We have a square piano here which belongs to a noted American actress. It has been here for a number of years, and I don't understand why she doesn't keep it in one of her homes or dispose of it. Her husband, who is also her manager, has come here with her a number of times and has urged her to do something with it, at least to have a useful table made of it, or something like that. She absolutely refuses, and I guess it'll stay here until Broadway is dark. She says she will never part with it because she first learned how to play on it.

Queer Things Turn Up.

"Of course most people when they are going to put their things in storage have a real house cleaning—probably the first real one they ever had. And some queer things have turned up. Lost wills, hidden treasure, things which have been missing for years. And when our men begin to pack all the fussiness in people begins to come out. 'Why did you put that there? Why didn't you pack this this way?' And hundreds of such questions. Of course, our men are experts; they have been packing valuables for years and they are constantly keeping our patrons from causing damage to their own property. Considering the varieties of human nature they have to serve I am often inclined to look for the halos under our men's hats."

"You are called upon to do some pretty queer tricks ocasionally, aren't you?"

"Yes, there's no limit to the things people can invent for others to do. And there's no limit to the things they can hypnotize themselves into believing are necessary to their existence. Here's a good example," says the manager, pointing to a tall hall clock which was ticking away, wasting its moments on the timeless room, as it were. "This clock has to be kept going. The owner insists that it must be wound regularly, otherwise it will deteriorate. The man who sold her the clock told her so and she has a great deal of respect for him, because he was really an astronomer, and had microscopes and telescopes, and had discovered stars and could tell fortunes. Anyway, he told her the clock must be kept going—and every eight days the keeper of the time assigned to the rite goes in and solemnly winds it.

"At the other extreme are the people who are almost criminally careless about their valuables. I don't mean only those who go away for the summer and leave their silverware behind the bathtub. For instance, last fall one of our old customers came in and asked for his silverware, which was rather valuable and included some fine presentation pieces. I happened to know personally that he had not sent us his silverware that summer and had been surprised. When he was told this he became highly indignant. He insisted that we had his silver—and hadn't he himself told the maid to bring it here the day before he left?

"We searched high and low and showed him all kinds of records—and there was no indication that his silver had ever come to us. After prolonged questioning he recalled that a few minutes before grabbing his valises he had told the maid to 'take the silver to the storage place on umpty street and umph avenue.' The maid looked up the place in the telephone book that sounded most like the noises her master made and took the stuff there. We traced out the story and questioned the maid. The silver was finally found in a storage place a few blocks away.

Many Who Forget.

"It is surprising how many people don't recognize their own possessions. Sometimes women—more often it is a man—will come to look at the goods or to ask to have it sent out. They will go through it and insist that we are trying to give them something which does not belong to them. 'Why, of course this isn't ours,' they will say. 'Why, we wouldn't have such a thing. Think of the poor people who will be looking for this if we take it,' and so on. By the aid of our books, records signed by themselves and our men at the time of removing the goods for storage, we can finally convince them that the disputed article really is theirs.

"Speaking of recognizing things reminds me of an incident. A few years ago an old negro came into our employ. I happened to be in one of the rooms when he entered for the first time. As he came through the door he stopped startled, staring at the wall opposite. He came closer, gazing intently. Suddenly he pointed to an old portrait of Washington—all excited—and said in an awed voice as if he were seeing ghosts. 'Tha's ma Peale, boss. Tha's ma Peale!' He repeated it over and over again, stepping toward it and away from it—looking at it closer and walking back for another view, his surprise changing to gladness. 'What do you mean, that's your Peale?' I asked. He told me the story.

"Many years ago he kept a curiosity shop in New Orleans and it was at the time when fine old Southern homes were being broken up and old possessions were finding their way to dealers. The fine Peale portrait of Washington came to this negro and he sold it for $300—because he was 'very fond of it.' We haven't this portrait here any more. It was sold for $12,000.

"It is funny, too, how some people will come in often just to look at their things. Most visits, are of course, for the purpose of taking out some particular thing. But many just come to see. I suppose it is like the woman and the mirrors. It does seem as if the old term 'household gods' means something. It almost looks as if they come on an ordinary road.

"Here, by the way, is one of our garages—or rather automobile storage rooms." There are here some of the finest cars in existence—imported models, special bodies, elaborate hand wrought work. They looked as if they would be desecrated to be run on an ordinary road."

The visitor is taken into a small room and requested to put on a large fur coat. Outside the mercury is knocking a hole in the top of the thermometer and one looks surprised. But when the door of one of the fur storage rooms is opened the fur coat is felt to have a reason. These big cold storage rooms are kept at a temperature of 34 degrees. It could be brought down to zero if necessary. But it has been found that the higher temperature is ideal for fur storage conditions. Here, hanging neatly and unwrapped, is an assortment of furs which would do credit to any Fifth avenue fur shop—in fact, that is where most of the things come from. The direct play of the cold clean air on the garments which hang loosely is much better for them than any packing away. Gorgeous coats, muffs, neckpieces vie with each other in magnificence.

"This coat is worth $50,000," says the manager and the coat looks it. "Everything that comes in here is first treated for moth eggs. But the moths themselves are not so important. They die as soon as they come in here."

Some of the other cold storage rooms have splendid displays of animal heads—trophies of their owners' hunting prowess. And there are beautiful and costly tapestries of wonderful material.

Doffing the Arctic apparel the visitor suddenly finds himself in the great hall of an English castle. The walls are all of marvelous carved wood in fine panels and wainscoting. The room is empty and the manager anticipates a remark. There are three rooms here like these, and they have nothing in them except the walls. The carved work was taken from an English castle and brought here some years ago by well known dealers. Every few months or so very wealthy customers of these dealers are brought in here to look over these rooms.

Worth a King's Ransom.

Then come visits into numerous silverware rooms and vaults for other valuables—hundreds of rooms, thousands of valuables—everything conceivable in confusion. What are all the things in this room worth?" one asks. The manager smiles. "Let us say a king's ransom," he replies, "whatever that may be at the present rate of exchange."

"But aren't you afraid of something happening?"

"Well, we have never had a fire or a burglary. Perhaps an air raid might have some effect, but the possibility is remote. The walls are four feet thick."

One comes to a door and the manager opens it with a little flourish. This must be a "show" room. It is. All over the spacious walls are hung fine paintings and etchings—hung with an artist's eye—all uncovered. It is really a beautiful art gallery. "This is an original B— J—," says the manager, mentioning the name of a French master. He points to a large striking canvas showing a satyr and nymphs—a real masterpiece in its composition and the treatment of the flesh tints. He points out others, giving well known names. One goes out wondering why this prosaic storage warehouse is not on the list of art galleries to be "taken in" by visitors to the city.

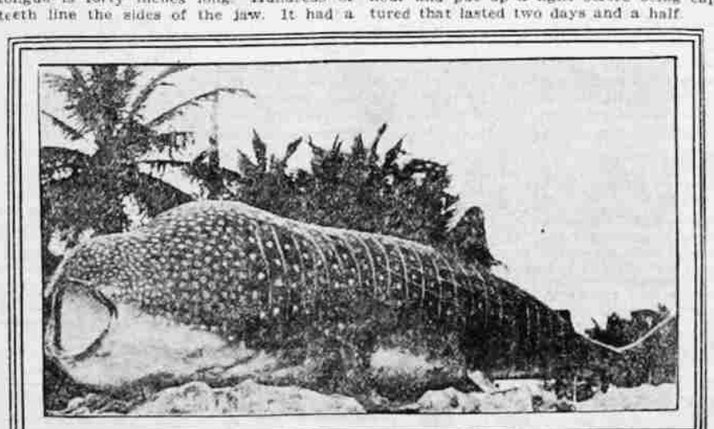
Twenty Battle With First Whale Shark Captured

THE first whale shark ever captured is on exhibition at the Smithsonian Institution at Washington, D. C. Capt. Charles Thompson of Miami, Fla., who has some big fish captures to his credit, including the largest devil fish ever lifted to land, is the captor of this monster. He caught it while cruising off Knight's Key. It took twenty men nearly two days to bring it ashore. The net weight of the fish is 30,000 pounds, its length is forty-five feet and its circumference at the thickest part is twenty-three feet nine inches. Its tail measures ten feet from tip to tip.

The scientists who looked this fish over said that he was only an infant whale shark and that full grown ones are two and one-half times as large. It inhabits the ocean at a depth of 1,500 feet and its hide is of great thickness to withstand the enormous water pressure. A .45-calibre bullet could not even dent it.

How this baby whale shark happened to come to the surface is conjecture, one explanation being that it was thrown up by a submarine volcanic disturbance and that in the journey its deep sea diving powers were injured so that it was unable to sink to its natural water levels.

The whale shark has little circular lidless eyes that are sightless. Its mouth is fifty inches wide and forty-three inches deep, its tongue is forty inches long. Hundreds of teeth line the sides of the jaw. It had a speed on the surface of forty-five miles an hour and put up a fight before being captured that lasted two days and a half.



WHALE SHARK WEIGHS 15 TONS AND IS ONLY A BABY
© CHARLES THOMPSON

Substitute for Ice

AN interesting substitute for ice is provided in some parts of Syria. Snow gathered in the mountains is packed in a conical pit, dug in the ground and provided at the bottom with a drain to carry off the water formed—for some of the snow unavoidably melts. The snow is tamped firmly and covered with straw and leaves.

From these pits the solidified snow is distributed to customers on packhorses, and costs all the way from 10 to 25 cents per 100 pounds.